

CITY OF INDIANAPOLIS

WCTY Government Channel 16

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W., Room 222
Washington, D.C.
20554

MAR 23 1997

In the Matter of

FCC

Implementation of the
Telecommunications Act of 1996

Closed Captioning of Video Programming

NPRM Docket # 95-176

March 26, 1997

To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments pertaining to NPRM Docket # 95-176 in the matter of closed captioning of video programming.

During the 1997 NCTA Conference, I attended a session called "Lunch with the FCC". It was at this session that the FCC's William Johnson mentioned that closed captioning costs were about \$125 an hour and that he thought that of the PEG access entities to be exempted from closed captioning, educational and public access were the most likely to be excluded. He could not say for sure if government access would be exempted from closed captioning requirements. We countered that even at \$125 an hour, with the endless hours that our government access performs in LIVE municipal meeting coverage, neighborhood meetings, remote events and studio coverage.....we could easily be talking about a financial burden that could be half of our annual budget. William Johnson said that the FCC has no intention of making this a burden on public, educational or government (PEG) access.

At another session, TCI President Leo Hindery noted that he believed the cable operators will have to pay for closed captioning requirements at the tune of \$2,500 an hour. He related that this was another example of those unfair franchise obligations and his resentment toward DBS in not

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having to play on the level field, (though I would assume that since we are talking of video programming and its closed captioning that this would include DBS). Incidentally, the \$2,500 an hour figure is certainly considerably more than the hourly figure suggested by the FCC's William Johnson.

Today, I spoke with Marcia Glauberman of the FCC and she suggested that consideration be given to adding a 5-7% increase to the customer's cable bill to subsidize the closed captioning. As the cable administrator for the City of Indianapolis, I can say with some experience that an increase of that magnitude on top of the other increases and external costs is going to be a tough sale to an already disgruntled customer base.

In conclusion, it is the recommendation by the Cable Communications Agency of the City of Indianapolis that PEG Access be exempted across the board from the financial burden of closed captioning.

Thank you for your kind consideration in reviewing our comments on this NPRM pertaining to closed captioning of video programming.

Respectfully submitted,


Rick Maultra

Telecommunications Coordinator
City of Indianapolis

CC: Cable Bureau/FCC Information Office
FCC Commissioners
Indianapolis & Marion County Cable Franchise Board
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